

ON THE MOVE

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Vision

Safer Communities
Through Successful
Youth.

Mission Statement

ADJC enhances public protection by assisting in the changing of delinquent thinking and behaviors of juvenile offenders committed to the Department.



Functional Family Therapy: Better Services for ADJC Youth and Families

The Arizona Department of Juvenile Corrections is pleased to have Touchstone Behavioral Health as a community partner. Touchstone will provide training in Functional Family Therapy (FFT) to our all case workers and psychology associates that work in secure care facilities to ensure continuity of services, especially as youth prepare to transition back to the community. Transition is key and ADJC staff are taking a lead in ensuring youth experience minimal barriers to successful reunification with their families.

Research indicates that punitive approaches to juvenile crime alone are largely ineffective and costly to taxpayers. Juvenile offenders removed from their families and communities eventually return, and unless their underlying behavioral problems have been treated effectively, these youth will likely remain in the criminal justice system.

Functional Family Therapy is an empirically grounded, well documented and highly successful family intervention for at-risk and juvenile justice involved youth. Its high rates of effectiveness has been recognized by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, the U.S. Surgeon General's Report on Youth Violence and is also one of the only interventions named by the U.S. Surgeon General as a model program for seriously delinquent youths.

Youth and families who have a range of behavioral problems often feel they have limited resources and time to deal with their children acting out in inappropriate ways. Families may have a history of failure and may have been seen through multiple state systems that have failed to address the issues in a comprehensive manner. FFT can be provided in a variety of settings, including schools, probation, parole, aftercare, and as an alternative to incarceration or out-of-home placement.

Family strengthening is important to helping delinquent youth become successful. ADJC is excited about this opportunity to train our staff so that each youth and their families have hope for a better future.

Youth Success Stories

Cesar was committed to ADJC in July 2007, received his GED and soon thereafter, was released on Parole. Cesar remained engaged in his education and treatment while living at home. He completed his community service hours at a local food bank, and enrolled in Vocational Rehabilitation Services which helped him enroll in a restaurant training program. He graduated from the program several weeks later and remains employed. During his counseling, Cesar denounced the criminal life, citing that he did not want to become like his brother who is serving time in adult prison. Cesar was granted an absolute discharge in June 2008.

Cody was committed to ADJC April 2005, and was released on Parole March 2006. Cody had been dependent on meth since the age of eleven but made a commitment to be drug free. He became involved in student counsel, religious activities and even received his GED. After release, Cody continued his education, obtained his high school diploma, completed community service requirements and obtained his first job. At sixteen, Cody exceeded all Parole expectations. He was granted an absolute discharge in June 2008.

ADJC Quarterly Highlights



- ADJC recently formed a new partnership with Arizona Power Paws Assistance Dogs. Through our mutual interest in helping those in need, Power Paws generously donated a two-year old Golden-Poodle mix. 'Hannah' joined our Canine Team in June as the new therapy dog. Her handler, Tricia Vanderzee, has been with ADJC since August 2006 as a YCO II at Black Canyon School. Hannah will be used to help juveniles during crisis, ground them when events seem out of control, or act as a bridge to communication with the therapists. The team of animal and handler can be used in instances of grief, loss and trauma.
- The Education Division was recently notified of a \$397,000 grant from the U.S. Department of Education, "*A Brighter Future through Literacy Grant*" program. Funding will be used to purchase computer equipment, printers, the hiring of a full-time Librarian and two assistants. Earlier this year, all four secure care facilities opened libraries for youth to access during school time. Each school library has been well received.
- Deputy Director Dr. Kellie Warren, and Clinical Director Dr. Lee Underwood recently published a professional journal article on "*Sex Offender Care for Adolescents in Secure Care: Critical Factors and Counseling Strategies*" in Clinical Psychology Review, Vol. 28, 6 July, 917-932. This article represents a best practice model and ADJC's sex offender services, which are offered at Adobe Mountain and Catalina Mountain Schools, are consistent with the evidence reported in the article.

Director's Corner

On September 9, 2008, ADJC held our Annual Honors Ceremony, recognizing over 150 outstanding staff, contractors and community partners who are making a difference in the lives of ADJC youth. The theme of this year's award ceremony was '*Motivated and Moving Forward*' and I am confident that ADJC staff will remain motivated and move this agency forward in the years ahead. I'm encouraged and grateful at all the hard work that goes on each day. Frequently I meet with secure care and community parole staff, to discuss their day, their challenges, and what the leadership of the agency can do to ensure staff and youth are safe, and that appropriate tools and resources are available. I appreciate all the feedback from staff and volunteers alike in helping us achieve our mission.

During these tough economic times, ADJC, like other state agencies are looking at ways to be fiscally conservative. Our quality level of providing education, treatment and rehabilitative services will not change. If I can address any concerns, please don't hesitate to contact me at by email at mbranham@azdjc.gov.